

I want to urge you in the strongest possible terms to not relax restrictions on media ownership. If anything, the current restrictions do not go far enough. We have already seen diversity in commercial radio almost eliminated by conglomerates such as ClearChannel. The dominance of ClearChannel in many local radio markets has led to the elimination of meaningful local content and the homogenization of entertainment into limited formats and limited playlists.

More disturbing than the disastrous impact ownership concentration has had on creativity and diversity in entertainment is the serious threat it represents to democracy, the free flow of information and a free press in America. Here again, television and radio news is already too dominated by media conglomerates who have dispensed entirely with the concept of news as a public service in favor of news as entertainment. The quality, accuracy and fairness of electronic journalism has suffered as a result.

I live in San Diego, which like most American cities currently only has one major daily newspaper. The thought that one company could own both that paper as well as a significant portion of the radio and television stations in my city is a frightening prospect indeed. The idea that such a company could do the same in multiple markets is simply unacceptable.

In order for American democracy to function at both national and local levels, there must be a diversity of information, perspectives and opinions available to all citizens. The new media ownership rules being considered by the FCC represent a direct threat to this diversity. I urge the FCC not to abdicate its responsibility to regulate public airwaves in the public's interest.